

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OF THE
TOWN OF FOXBOROUGH

Regular Meeting

Date: December 8, 2020

Time: 7:02 p.m.

Place: Gala Meeting Room, Town Hall

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Richard Pearson, Mr. Rob Canfield,
Ms. Tina Belanger, Mr. Brent Ruter arrived late

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER NOT PRESENT: Ms. Michelle Raymond

SCHOOL STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Amy Berdos, Mr. William Yukna

SCHOOL STAFF PARTICIPATING REMOTELY: Dr. Alison Mello

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE PARTICIPATING REMOTELY: Ms. Chiara Pacini

Mr. Pearson opened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance and those viewing at home.

Open Public Comment

No public comments were submitted since the last meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Belanger moved; Canfield seconded

Approve the regular meeting minutes of November 24, 2020, as amended

Vote: 3-0-0

Teaching and Learning Highlight

Dr. Berdos introduced Middle School Student Council Advisors Ms. Jacklyn McCann, and Ms. Alicia Campellone as well as Ahern Principal Ms. Kerry Frazier. She then turned the segment over to Middle School Student Council officers and eighth grade students Cathryn Noone, President; Sara Polito, Vice President; and Jacob Hindin, Communications Director. All attended the meeting via Zoom. Ms. Leigh Ricci, World Language Teacher and Student Council Advisor, was not able to attend the meeting. Student Council officers were excited to share their plans for the 2020-2021 school year. Goals centered around the themes of making connections with their fellow students via Zoom meetings, linking students from the two different cohorts using a buddy system, and giving back to the community via a Toys for Tots drive. Their focus is to forge a stronger sense of community during this difficult year with limited in-school time with their peers due to hybrid learning.

School Committee Student Representative and FHS Student Council President Ms. Pacini suggested that the high school and middle school councils meet to collaborate in the future prior to eighth grade moving on to the high school.

Questions and discussion with the Committee followed.

Preliminary Discussion of Proposed FY '22 Budget

Dr. Berdos opened the presentation of the FY '22 Preliminary Budget and reviewed the Budget Timeline and the Budget Message. The budget message is what frames the entire budget and the

philosophy behind it. This budget proposal maintains reasonable class sizes, preserves current programs and services to students, addresses increased special education costs, the costs of new technology tools and solutions, and enables the district to meet state guidelines across all aspects of public education.

Mr. Yukna described the budget process in detail. Each year the budget is developed by school/program areas in each building, is an all-in budget, and includes grants and revolving accounts to offset salaries and expenses. The budget assumes a \$125,000 in retirement savings. The FY '22 Proposed Budget is an increase from last year of 2.98% (\$1,116,894). The increase is based on cost of living increases and contractual commitments. Expenses are level funded. The Board of Selectmen projected an increase of 2.5% based on leveled services with limited enhancements.

The only staffing change is the increase of a 0.1 FTE (full-time equivalent) elementary speech and language pathologist due to an increased need in special education in-district programs. Special education out-of-district tuitions have been adjusted based on current placements, and a reduction in utility operating costs to reflect savings from energy efficiency programs has been applied. There are three (3) collective bargaining agreements set to expire in June 2021 and will be renegotiated (Custodial Workers, Maintenance Workers and Crossing Guards).

A budget comparison from FY '14 through FY '21 was provided as well as student enrollment from FY '17. Projected enrollment for FY '22 shows a slight increase in students at the elementary and high school levels. Unexpected expenses and staff adjustments due to COVID will continue to be monitored through the budget process.

Next steps in the budget include continued review by Administration, monitoring available revenue changes, School Committee Budget Subcommittee review, School Committee public vote on January 26, 2021, and presentation of the FPS budget to the Advisory Committee. Members of the Advisory Committee were in attendance via Zoom. Several questions were posed by the Committee regarding the cost for virtual learners, the continuous rigorous level of cleaning and out-of-district placements. Discussion followed.

School Committee Vote on School Choice

Dr. Berdos stated the School Committee is required to vote annually on school choice, and this year the vote is being taken early per School Committee request. Policy JFBB states it is the policy of FPS to not admit non-resident students under the terms and conditions of the Inter-District School Choice Law. The recommendation of Administration is to continue that practice. Dr. Berdos and Mr. Yukna explained the rationale for that decision.

Belanger moved; Canfield seconded

Continue with the current policy of Foxborough Public Schools to not admit non-resident students

Vote: 3-1-0

Approval to Establish a Technology Revolving Account

A technology revolving account is in the process of being established to receive funds collected for payment to the Device Protection Program that covers devices deployed to students/families as we move to a 1:1 device district. The Technology Department is also in the process to become certified as a Lenovo repair center, and this account will be used for funds to pay for repair materials and replacements going forward. The establishment of this account will need approval from the School Committee. As details are still being worked out, this item is deferred to the next School Committee meeting on December 22.

Acceptance of Donation

Dr. Berdos presented the donation from the Foxboro Kickers Club totaling \$2,600 to the Committee for their consideration.

Ruter moved; Belanger seconded

Accept with gratitude the donation from the Foxboro Kickers Club totaling \$2,600 comprised of three (3) separate checks in the amounts of \$2,000, \$100, and \$500, to support the FHS Girls' and Boys' soccer programs

Vote: 4-0-0

Other Matters

Mr. Yukna provided an update on the Burrell Renovation Project, reporting that Phase 2 may be completed within the next month. Phase 2 includes Kindergarten, first grade and second grade classrooms, the new media center, and the new technology lab. The front entrance way will not be complete until mid-January, and the gym is available for the contractor now, which is sooner than expected.

Ms. Belanger commented the building is coming along well per a site visit a few weeks ago.

Dr. Berdos stated that English Language Arts and Math MCAS testing for juniors has been postponed and will not take place during the January/February window. Grade 12 students and others who need to will still be able to take the test in January in order to earn their competency determination.

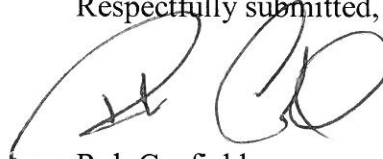
She also reported on changes in COVID quarantining and remarked the COVID dashboard on the FPS website will be updated every Wednesday.

In addition, the Technology Department is continuing to deploy lap tops to students. Deployment at the Ahern will be done by the end of this week, and grades 2, 3 and 4 will receive their devices starting this Thursday. Kindergarten and first grade deployment will occur after the first of the year. All laptops are preloaded with content when students receive the device based on grade level. Feedback about the devices has been positive.

Belanger moved; Ruter seconded
Adjourn the meeting
Vote: 4-0-0

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rob Canfield', written over a horizontal line.

Rob Canfield
Clerk

Attachments:

Regular meeting minutes of November 24, 2020
FPS FY '22 Preliminary Budget
Policy JFBB – School Choice
Foxboro Kickers Club Donation

Approved: December 22, 2020